

Sectional Analysis of H.R. 1023

Summary of H.R. 1023 “Charles ‘Pete’ Conrad Astronomy Awards Act”

This bill authorizes the NASA Administrator to establish an awards program in honor of Charles ‘Pete’ Conrad, astronaut and space scientist, for recognizing the discoveries made by amateur astronomers of asteroids with near-Earth orbit trajectories. The bill authorizes to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out the act from sums otherwise authorized to be appropriated.

Section 1. Short Title.

Section 2 Definitions.

Section 2. Pete Conrad Astronomy Award Program.

This section authorizes the NASA Administrator to establish the Charles ‘Pete’ Conrad Astronomy Awards program based on the recommendations of the Minor Planet Center of the Smithsonian Astro-physical Observatory.

The Act establishes awards for the following individuals: a) an amateur astronomer, or group of amateur astronomers who discovers the intrinsically brightest new asteroid having a near-Earth orbit in the previous calendar year; b) an amateur astronomer, or group of amateur astronomers who provide the greatest service to update the Minor Planet Center’s catalogue of known near-Earth asteroids in the preceding year. The awards for both categories are limited to U.S. citizens.

The Act requires that applicants demonstrate that they are not funded to use professional telescopes or observations while participating in the program. Government and professional astronomers associated with surveys of NEOs, as well as their family members, are ineligible for the awards.

The Act authorizes to be appropriated such sums as may be necessary to carry out the act from sums otherwise authorized to be appropriated.